

***Cryptantha rostellata* Greene**
beaked cryptantha
Boraginaceae (Borage Family)

Status: State Threatened
Rank: G4S2

General Description: Adapted from Hitchcock et al. (1959): Slender annual, 4 to 16 inches tall, simple or branched. Herbage strigose, leaves linear, scattered, lower several pairs opposite. Spikes naked, tending to be in pairs or in threes. Calyx becoming somewhat spreading at maturity, closely enveloping the nutlet, swollen only near the base, 1/8 inch long at maturity, beset with stout, spreading bristles that tend to be hooked or arching. Corolla 1/16 inch wide. Nutlet solitary, to 1/8 inch long, smooth, lanceolate, distinctly compressed, often with distinctly angular margins, broadly truncate at the base, the scar evidently expanded below into an open areola. The style reaching or commonly shortly surpassing the middle of the nutlet.

Identification Tips: *Cryptantha rostellata* is most likely to be confused with *C. flaccida*. *C. flaccida* also produces a single nutlet, whose shape is slightly different from *C. rostellata*, and whose fruiting calyx is appressed to the stem. A technical key is recommended for positive identification.

Phenology: The taxon flowers from late April to mid-May. Plants can be identified through mid-June.

Range: Known from Kittitas County, Washington south through Oregon to central California. Currently known in Washington from Asotin, Kittitas and Klickitat counties in the Columbia Basin physiographic province. Historically known from Yakima and Walla Walla counties.

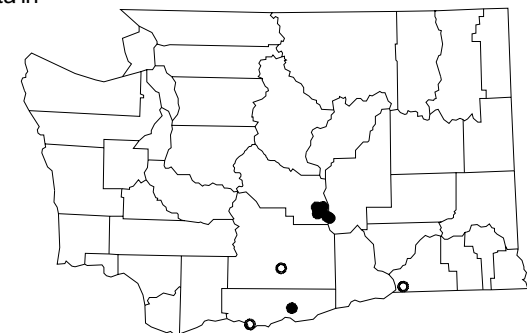
Habitat: This taxon occurs within some of the driest microsites within the Columbia Basin. Most locations are within *Artemisia tridentata* / *Agropyron spicatum* habitat types, although some occur within *Artemisia rigida* / *Poa secunda* habitats. Shrubs present can include *Purshia tridentata*, *Ribes cereum*, and *Salvia dorrii*. Native forbs include *Blepharipappus scaber*, *Scutellaria angustifolia*, *Collomia grandiflora*, *Cryptantha pterocarya*, *Pectocarya setosa*, *Phacelia linearis*, *Lomatium grayi*, *Balsamorhiza careyana*, and *Lithophragma* sp. *Bromus tectorum*

Cryptantha rostellata
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Known distribution of
Cryptantha rostellata in
Washington



● Current (1980+)
○ Historic (older than 1980)

Cryptantha rostellata

beaked cryptantha



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Habitat (cont.): and *Poa bulbosa* are common non-natives present within these habitats. This species generally occurs on coarse substrates. Elevation ranges from 600 to 2900 feet.

Ecology: *Cryptantha rostellata* is usually found in scattered patches of a few individuals along dry drainages. The sites are kept open by the harshness of the environment and/or slight erosion (Salstrom and Easterly 1998). The number of individuals present probably fluctuates yearly in response to weather and seed production (Salstrom and Easterly 1998).

State Status Comments: The small number of occurrences and the limited range of this species contribute to its status in Washington.

Inventory Needs: Additional inventory is needed throughout the Columbia Basin.

Threats and Management Concerns: Threats include grazing, erosion, and invasion of habitat by exotic species.

References:

Hitchcock, C. L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1959. *Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest, Part 4: Ericaceae Through Campanulaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle. 510 pp.

Salstrom, D. and R. Easterly. 1998. Report on the status of *Cryptantha rostellata* Greene in Endangered and Sensitive Plant Survey of the Yakima Training Center, Final Report prepared for the U.S. Army / Yakima Training Center (Ft. Lewis).